



## LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

### C481: Challenging the Sea of Formations



### Chapter 481: Challenging the Sea of Formations

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"Perfect formation?" Seeing his old friend losing his composure, Hall Master Sai was baffled.

He had heard of Confinement Formation, Illusion Formation, Beguilement Formation, Spirit Gathering Formation... But he had never heard of a perfect formation before.

"Just like with painting and pills, there are different tiers to a completed formation as well. Even when setting up the same formation, how can the might of a formation set up 2-star formation master compare to that of a 5-star formation master?"

Suppressing his confusion, Guild Leader Zheng began to explain.

Hall Master Sai was taken aback.

Even with formation plates of the same grade, everyone hoped to buy one inscribed by a higher ranked formation master as their craft tended to be more stable and powerful.

The same applied for pills as well. Those forged by higher ranked apothecaries tended to be of higher quality and thus, possessed greater medicinal effectiveness.

"The difference between formations mainly lies in how much they complement the environment and how much energy they can borrow from the surroundings!"

Seeing the incomprehension on Hall Master Sai's face, Guild Leader Zheng explained, "Formations that reach a synchronization rate of twenty percent with the environment are termed as Initiate. A formation of this level can be successfully activated to do whatever it is intended to do. Only when one can prepare a formation of this level can one be considered an official formation master.

"At a synchronization rate of forty percent, the formation will be able to borrow a portion of the energy from the surroundings to augment the might of the formation. At this level, one's understanding of the formation can be considered to have reached intermediate-tier. As a 4-star formation master, I can still easily reach this level when setting up a grade-2 formation.

"Going on, at a synchronization rate of sixty percent, the environment and formation can be considered to be complementing one another already. This is also what we call a high-tier formation. Occasionally, while I am setting up a grade-1 formation, I can reach this level...

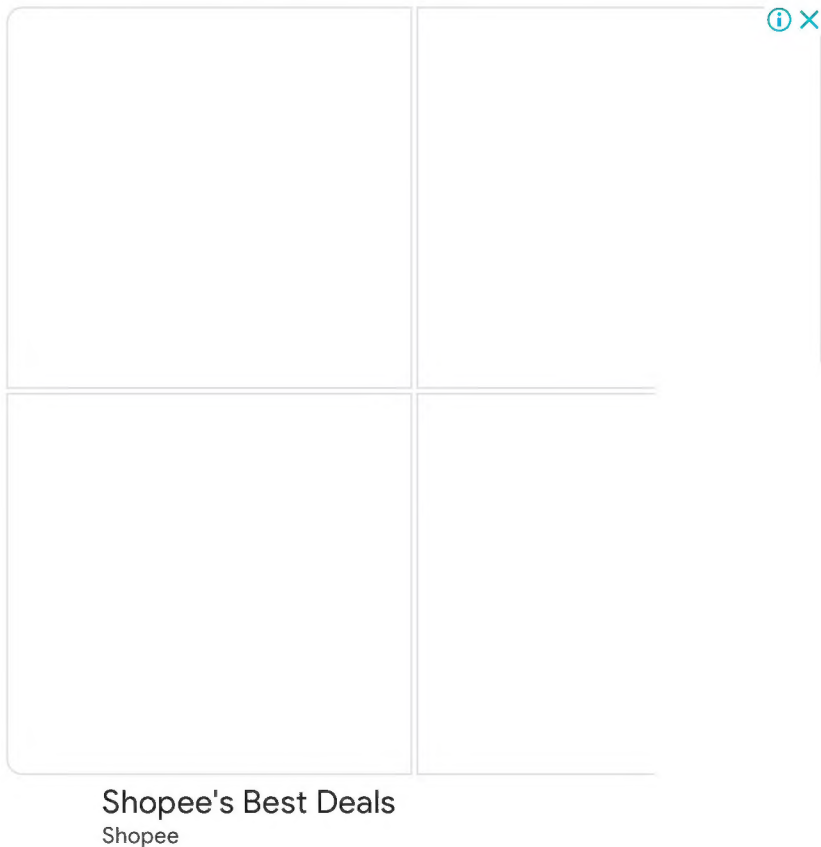
"Then, at a synchronization rate of eighty percent, it wouldn't be wrong to say that the environment is what that is driving the formation. Just like conscious Spirit tools, a formation of this level is able to tap into the natural energy contained in the surroundings to create hurricanes, storm, trap beings, and leave them in distress."

After saying that, Guild Leader Zheng's lips turned pale. "Even if you can break out of a formation, can you break out of your environment?"

Hall Master Sai was stunned.

One can walk out of a formation, a room, a courtyard... But everywhere one stood was the environment, so how could one walk out of it? How could one overcome it?

Upon comprehending this level, even formation masters would find it hard to break out of the formation once trapped



"Wait a moment..."

Upon recalling something, Hall Master Sai's body trembled and his eyes widened in round circles. He stared at Guild Leader Zheng in disbelief and asked, "That's just a synchronization rate of eighty percent... What about a hundred percent?"

"Indeed, it's exactly what you're thinking. It's known as the... perfect formation!"

There was a slight quiver to Guild Leader Zheng's voice as he said, "It perfectly harmonizes with one's environment such that when it's in a dormant state, it won't cause any disturbances to the surroundings, thus giving rise to the term 'Absence of Ripples'. However, the moment it is triggered, the environment will be completely changed. The

formation will become the environment, and the environment is the formation... Try thinking about it, how can cultivating in a Spirit Gathering Formation compare up to cultivating in a natural environment?"

It was just like an air-conditioner. No matter how comfortable the temperature was, it still couldn't compare to the warmth of spring.

"Using just formation flags and core to change the environment, legend has it that only formation masters of 6-star and above are capable of such a feat..."

At this point, even Guild Leader Zheng himself was in disbelief.

A while ago, this fellow before him didn't even know that Spirit Gathering Formation plates didn't exist in the Formation Master Guild and yet, in the next moment, he set up a formation that only 6-star formation masters were capable of, a perfect formation...

Am I insane or is the world going mad?

There had never been such a happening in the history of the guild!

Perplexed, the voice of the young man sounded, "You can sell the Spirit Gathering Formation flags, core, and blueprint to me now, right?"

The formation that Zhang Xuan had just prepared was the most basic type of Spirit Gathering Formation. It wasn't capable of extracting spiritual energy from the spirit stones to fuel his consumption. To do so, a formation of at least grade-4 was required.

"Of course..."

Guild Leader Zheng nodded his head stiffly.

If a person who was capable of forging a perfect formation was unqualified to purchase those items, then wasn't him even more unqualified?

"May I know... what is Zhang Shi's formation master rank?" After agreeing to the matter, Guild Leader Zheng hesitated for a short moment before asking.

While it was a known fact that only 6-star formation masters were capable of preparing a perfect grade-2 formation, some of the top-notch geniuses were able to do so as well. The person before him hadn't even reached Transcendent Mortal realm yet so clearly, it was impossible for his to rank to be too high. Even so, he wanted to know the other party's exact ranking so as to determine how he should treat him.

"Formation master? I've never taken the examination before so I can't be considered as one..." Zhang Xuan shook his head.

It was just a moment ago that he started learning about it so naturally, he had never taken any examination of that sort before.

"You aren't a formation master?" Guild Leader Zheng's mouth twitched and his body swayed feebly.

Putting aside how other party was able to set up the formation so swiftly, the formation even reached such a high tier... And yet, the other party wasn't even an official formation master? Where in the world did this monster come from?

He was a 4-star pinnacle formation master, but in terms of speed, he couldn't match up to the other party at all. And naturally, he couldn't prepare a perfect formation either.

"May I know if... Zhang Shi is willing to participate in our guild's examination?"

A thought flashed through Guild Leader Zheng's mind and his eyes lit up in desire.

There were countless branches under a headquarters. If the other party were to take the examination here, he would be considered as a genius of Honghai City. If the headquarters were to hear of it, they would definitely reward the Honghai City Formation Master Guild handsomely.

"Sure!" Zhang Xuan nodded in agreement.

It didn't matter to him where he took the examination. In any case, to advance through the ranks of a master teacher, he needed more supporting occupations. Formation master was considered as one of the most influential occupations of the Upper Nine Paths. It would be for the best if he could become an official member of this group.

"Great! I'll make preparations now then..."

Upon hearing the other party agree to it, Guild Leader Zheng smiled in excitement. "As for the Spirit Gathering Formation's formation flags, core, and blueprint, once you pass the examination, there will be no need for you to buy them. I can simply give you a set!"

The Formation Master Guild operated in a similar manner to the Apothecary Guild — it was extremely difficult for a low-ranked member to access content beyond their level. He would have to clear many authorizations first.

However, if one's rank had reached the prerequisite, one could take it away straight even without payment.

"Alright!" Upon hearing that he could be spared from his expenses, Zhang Xuan hurriedly nodded his head.

Even though he wasn't lacking in spirit stones now, he felt that he should save as much as possible especially since he would require a humongous amount of spirit stone to achieve breakthroughs. Several ten thousand spirit stones might be a huge fortune to

other cultivators, but to him, it might not even be sufficient for him to reach Transcendent Mortal 2-dan.

Thus, he felt that he should save as much of it as possible.

"What is the format of the formation master examination?" Zhang Xuan asked.

He felt that he should at least ask properly before taking the examination.

Just like the master teacher examination, there were many variations to the formation master examination. Depending on the branch itself, the requirements may differ.

It was just like how in Tianwu Kingdom, the examination content to becoming a 1-star formation master was to successfully set up a grade-1 formation. As a prosperous city of the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, the examination here might be slightly different.

"The examination of our branch is indeed slightly unique as compared to the other branch. It is slightly more difficult, and it is known as the... Sea of Formations!" Guild Leader Zheng said.

"Sea of Formations?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

"Un. The Sea of Formations refers to the multitude of formation that countless formation masters of the guild have left behind throughout the years. Upon entering it, one could meet with a formation of any kind. The condition for success is to break out of the formation one is trapped in. There is a total of four stages and each stage corresponds to formations of grade-1 to grade-4 respectively. If one passes the first stage, one will be qualified as a 1-star formation master, and if one passes the second stage, one will be qualified as a 2-star formation master... so on and so forth!" Guild Leader Zheng explained.

"I see, that's indeed more difficult than setting up formations!" Zhang Xuan nodded his head.

Setting up a formation and breaking out a formation was just like ascending and descending from a mountain.

It was easy to ascend a mountain, but descending a mountain was fraught with many difficulties.

While setting up a formation, one just had to identify the correct attributes and position the formation accurately in order to succeed. But to break out of a formation... considering that one would be within the formation, it would be hard for one to get an overview of the situation to discern the type of formation. If one were to make a lapse of judgement, it would be extremely easy for one to make a fatal mistake.

"It's indeed a little difficult. However, if one possesses a deep understanding of formations, it won't be a problem at all!" Guild Leader Zheng chuckled.

"Oh?"

"Even though there are innumerable formations contained within the Sea of Formations, if one can accurately determine the type, name, and life gate of the formation quickly, breaking out of it would be much easier than setting up a formation. But regardless of which examination it is, be it the setting up of a formation or the Sea of Formations, one has to possess an in-depth understanding of formations first. Otherwise, it will be impossible for one to pass the tests!"



After explaining, Guild Leader Zheng looked at the young man before him and said, "Since Zhang shi has never taken the formation master examination before, you should start from the grade-1 formations to get used to it first. This way, you can accumulate some experience such that you won't panic when meeting with formations of higher grades."

Zhang Xuan nodded. Then, after a moment of hesitation, he asked, "But before that, I would like to pay a visit to the library!"

Even the most formidable formation that he had gathered via the Library of Heaven's Path was only of grade-2 at the moment. If he wanted to go further in the examination, he would have to browse through more books.

"You wish to browse through some books? That's fine as well. Xiaowu, take Zhang shi to the library. It has been long since anyone has challenged the fourth stage of the Sea of Formations so it'll require some preparation time anyway!"

Guild Leader Zheng chuckled.

He didn't think about the other party's request to browse through books much.

It was natural for formation masters to request for access to books to enhance their knowledge. He also frequented the library himself to look up unique formations so as to expand his horizons.

"Yes!" The young man Xiaowu nodded.

"Zhang shi..."

Zhang Xuan was led away by the young man, leaving Hall Master Sai standing in a daze on the spot with widened eyes.

Weren't you here to buy formation plates? How did it turn into you taking the formation master examination?

That was an Upper Nine Paths occupation, one of the top occupations of the continent. To take the examination so abruptly... It was almost like how he challenged the Harmonious Stream of Flowing Goblets previously...

"Old Zheng, how far do you think... Zhang shi can go in the examination?"

He couldn't help but turn to Guild Leader Zheng.

"I have no idea how many stages he can clear but given how he's able to set up a perfect 2-star Spirit Gathering Formation so easily, his understanding of formations can only be above mine. In other words, even at worst, he's at least of 4-star pinnacle or perhaps... even 5-star!" Guild Leader Zheng said with a grim expression.

"4-star pinnacle? 5-star?" Hall Master Sai was shocked.

When he first met Zhang shi, he only thought that the other party was formidable in appraising, but even so, that was more than sufficient to awe him. Never in his dreams did he expect the other party to be so knowledgeable in formations as well, to the extent of surpassing even his old friend.

To possess such knowledge and capability at his age... How in the world did he manage to do it?

"That's right. However, the Sea of Formations isn't easy. It'll be hard for those inexperienced to pass the examination. All I hope is for him to clear more stages so that another genius can rise from our branch!"

Guild Leader Zheng nodded his head.

"Clear more stages..."

As he replied, Hall Master Sai's mouth suddenly twitched. A thought popped into his mind.

If this fellow were to challenge the Sea of Formations, would it end up... just like the Appraiser Hall? Would he cause chaos in the Formation Master Guild as well?

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